



**SRO**

STATE SCHOOL REFORM/REDESIGN OFFICE  
Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget

# Unreasonable Hardship Determination Report

Pontiac High School

---

February 2017

DRAFT

## Table of Contents

Framework .....	3
Unreasonable Hardship Review Process .....	5
Part 1: Data Review .....	5
Part 2: Academic On-Site Review .....	8
Operational On-Site Review .....	19
Part 3: Access and Availability .....	20
Part. 4: Final Determination .....	22
Appendix A: Academic and Non-Academic Data .....	24
Appendix B: Facilities Condition Index .....	33
Appendix C: School Quality Maps .....	55
Appendix D: Financial Impact .....	62

## **Framework**

### **State School Reform/Redesign Office Background and Legal Authority**

The State School Reform/Redesign Office (SRO) was established in 2010 to serve as Michigan's academic accountability office. The mission of the SRO is to turn Michigan's Priority Schools into the highest-performing schools in Michigan. The SRO's vision is to create the necessary conditions for a globally superior public education system. To do this, the SRO uses both incentives for academic success and consequences for chronic failure. The following state and federal statutes establish the SRO and govern the office's action steps:

Michigan's Revised School Code 380.1280c: Section 1280c of the Revised School Code charges the SRO with the responsibility of identifying and supervising the lowest achieving 5% of schools (Priority Schools). Priority Schools submit reform/redesign plans to improve performance, and the SRO is granted authority to implement intervention if academic progress is not made (i.e. CEO operator for multiple schools, State School Reform/Redesign District (SSRRD), etc.). Priority Schools are required to submit monitoring reports to the SRO in a manner and frequency as determined by the SRO. The statute also provides exemptions for districts under emergency management.

Michigan's Executive Order No. 2015-9: Executive Order 2015-9 transferred the SRO from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB). It also transferred all authority, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities assigned to MDE and the Superintendent of Public Instruction under MCL 380.1280c to the SRO.

Michigan Public Act 192 (i.e. Enrolled House Bill 5384): The law divides the Detroit Public School District (DPS) into two separate districts and requires the SRO to mandate school closures via specified stipulations.

Under these statutes, the State School Reform/Redesign Office must make notifications and issue orders to Public School Academy Authorizers and/or Traditional Public School Superintendents/Board Presidents establishing different levels of accountability based on the performance of the schools they operate/authorize.

### **Purpose**

On January 20, 2017, the SRO published the order subjecting [School] to a Next Level of Accountability pending an Unreasonable Hardship Determination. The purpose of this report is to:

- Outline the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process
- Detail the findings of the Unreasonable Hardship Review
- Publish the final Unreasonable Hardship Determination for Pontiac High School, and
- Detail next steps that the SRO recommends in light of the final Unreasonable Hardship Determination.

## Unreasonable Hardship Review Process

The SRO must complete an analysis of whether closure of Pontiac High School will result in unreasonable hardship to pupils attending Pontiac High School. The SRO will consider other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by the public school identified for closure to determine if closing the identified school(s) would result in an unreasonable hardship for the impacted students. The SRO is committed to ensuring that the closure of a failing school does not necessitate the enrollment of a displaced student in another failing school. The SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review will consist of three parts:

1. **Part 1:** A comprehensive review of all available data related to the past and current performance of the identified school(s)
2. **Part 2:** An academic and an operational on-site review
3. **Part 3:** A detailed examination of other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by the public school identified for closure.

A set of research-based Turnaround Practices served as the framework for the SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review. The Turnaround Practices<sup>1</sup> are based on both academic and practice-based research on the common characteristics of successful turnaround schools and are organized into five different domains:

- **Domain 1:** Leadership, Shares Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration
- **Domain 2:** Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction
- **Domain 3:** Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students
- **Domain 4:** School Climate and Culture
- **Domain 5:** District System: Districts develop systems to support, monitor, and sustain turnaround efforts

By structuring the SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review around these domains the SRO is acknowledging that in determining unreasonable hardship one must not only examine historic performance but must also work intimately with local community members and educators to determine if the academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround.

All of the information produced and insights gained from the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process have informed the SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination, which consists of a series of 3 Key Questions:

- **Question 1:** Are the academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround?
- **Question 2:** Are there are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?
- **Question 3:** Would the proposed NLA action result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils?

<sup>1</sup> See Edmonds, 1979; Bryk et al., 2010; Marzano, 2003; Newmann et al., 2001; Lane et al., 2014)



## Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 1: Data Review

In an effort to inform the Unreasonable Hardship Determination, the SRO requested a comprehensive set of both academic, cultural, and operational data from Pontiac High School. The data provided can be viewed in Appendix A. In reviewing this data as well as previously state-reported academic data, the SRO has identified the following Key Takeaways related to the past, and current realities Pontiac High School.

### Data Review Key Takeaways

- **Academic (Domains 2 and 3)**
  - Proficiency
    - Student proficiency in mathematics increased each year, however proficiency rates remain below █.
    - Student proficiency in English/Language Arts has increased to 21%.
    - Economically disadvantaged students increased reading proficiency from 10% in 2015 to 21% on 2016.
    - Science proficiency has increased each year since 2014, however proficiency rates remain below 7%.
    - Science proficiency rates for Hispanic students increased from █ to 12% between 2015 and 2016.
    - Social Studies proficiency rates remained stagnant at nearly 10% between 2014 and 2016.
  - Graduation Rate
    - Graduation rate increased from 51% to 71% between 2014 and 2015.
    - The greatest gains in graduation rates occurred with male students.
    - Male graduation rate increased from 50% to 65%
- **Climate and Culture (Domains 3 and 4)**
  - Enrollment
    - Enrollment declined by 131 students from 975 to 844 between 2014 and 2016.
    - Hispanic enrollment increased by 48 from 177 to 225 between 2014 and 2016.
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percentage of English Language Learners increased from 8% to 16%.
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percentage of students with disabilities decreased from 18% to 13%.
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percentage of economically disadvantaged students increased from 68% to 73%.
    - In 2014 there were 313 students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, in 2015 there were 285 students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and in 2016 there were 280 students 12<sup>th</sup> grade; a reduction of 33 students in the cohort.
  - Attendance
    - The attendance rate increased from 86% to 88% between 2014 and 2016.
    - The number of students chronically absent decreased from 494(52%) in 2014 to 404(47%) in 2016.
- **Professional (Domains 1 and 5)**
  - Teacher Evaluation
    - The number of teachers increased from 54 to 62 between 2014 and 2016.

- The number of teachers receiving a rating of highly effective increased from 18(33%) in 2014 to 19(30%) in 2016.
- The number of teachers receiving and effective rating increased from 34(63% in 2014 to 40(64%) in 2016.
- Two teachers received a rating of marginally effective in 2014 and 2016.
- One teacher received an ineffective rating in 2016.

DRAFT

## Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 2a: Academic On-Site Review

On Wednesday, February 8, 2017 two representatives of the SRO conducted the Academic On-Site Review for Pontiac High School. The purpose of this visit was to gain valuable insight related to the current academic realities of Pontiac High School from its building leaders, teachers, parents and community members. The Academic On-Site Review was structured as follows:

- Interviews with Building Leadership
- Building Walk-Through with Classroom Observations
- Teacher Leader Focus Group
- Student Focus Group
- Parent/Community Focus Group

In a letter sent on January 27, 2017, the SRO requested that Pontiac High School nominate both teacher leaders as well as parents and community members to participate in the Academic On-Site Review.

The review was structured around the research-based Turnaround Practices and questions that served to frame both the interviews as well as the focus group discussions. Responses from each conversation were analyzed and evaluated for their alignment with key indicators of best practices for high-gain, rapid turnaround schools. The following pages provide the results from the site visit. Rubric ratings (see below) and corresponding evidence (in bulleted form) is provided for each Turnaround Practice component.

### Rubric Descriptors

<u>Strong alignment with best practice</u>	<u>Moderate alignment with best practice</u>	<u>Low alignment with best practice</u>
All indicators are evident and there is strong evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively to improve instruction.	Some of the indicators are evident and there is some evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively to improve instruction.	A few or none of the indicators are evident and/or there is little to no evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively.

A key purpose of the site visit is to assess each school's capacity to engage in accelerated turnaround and to inform decisions regarding unreasonable hardship. As such, site reviewers and the SRO are focused on the following overarching questions.

#### Domain 1: Leadership, Shares Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration

- Does the school have a collaborative environment (e.g., sufficient teaming structures and ways of working together) that can lead to accelerated instructional improvement?
- Does the school leadership have systems in place to monitor and support the implementation of improvement strategies, including the use of frequent classroom observations?

#### Domain 2: Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction

- Does the school utilize a common core curriculum that is instructionally coherent and that displays a strong understanding of high quality instruction, among teachers and as supported and observed by administrators?
- Does school leadership have a system in place to identify teachers that may need additional support, and specific strategies for providing such support?

#### Domain 3: Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students

- Does the school have and actively utilize a system of assessments and interventions capable of providing student-specific supports and subsequent monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions?

#### Domain 4: School Climate and Culture

- Does the school provide a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and professional culture among adults?



## Determining Capacity for Successful Turnaround

**Key Question 1:** What are the core issues and challenges that have kept students at your school from achieving? How are you addressing these issues and challenges?

**Key Question 2:** What are the key practices and strategies that distinguish your school, and will allow your school to improve, leading to increased student achievement in the near future?

	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Adaptive Instructional Improvement</b> All stakeholders espouse an “improvement mindset” reflected in the school’s continuous review and assessment of improvement practices and strategies used within the school.</p> <p>Key Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school stops or modifies strategies that are not working and expands those that are working.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Respectful and Trusting Learning Environment</b> All stakeholders (students, teachers, community members, etc.) have high expectations for students and value working with and learning from each other.</p> <p>Key Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and students state that they believe that all of the students in the school will succeed (e.g., will do well in classes, graduate, attend and graduate college).</li> <li>Teachers and administrators work together in formal and informal teams on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Instructional Rigor</b> Instruction and instructional practices are engaging, differentiated, and sufficiently challenging for all students.</p> <p>Key Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers provide all students with lessons and instruction directly aligned with common core standards and aligned instructional practices.</li> <li>Written lessons and taught instruction includes stated and written learning objectives, multiple instructional strategies, and challenging (e.g., higher order) tasks, problems, and questioning strategies.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Targeted Interventions</b> The school expertly uses specific instructional strategies/interventions executed with a high degree of instructional expertise.</p> <p>Key Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student work is consistently improving.</li> <li>Instructional strategies and interventions are implemented with fidelity.</li> </ul>	

- Every focus group stated that they believe that all of the students at Pontiac High School can graduate and enter a college, university, or trade school.



- Teacher and administrator focus groups shared that formal professional learning community meetings occur on a regular basis. Content teams meet during common preparation periods and grade level teams meet after school.
- The administration and teachers focus groups described the formal communication system designed for academic turnaround which includes a District Turnaround Network (DTN), Building Turnaround Network (BTN), Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), Grade Level PLC, Content Level PLC, Faculty Coordinating Council, Student engagement Team (SET), Phoenix Task Force, and building leadership team.
- All focus groups indicated that informal discussion and collaboration occur daily in a variety of capacities.
- The administration indicated that the school is implementing the new district communication protocol in order to improve communication and response time.
- Teachers and administrators reported the implementation of blended learning, small groups, project based learning, and differentiated instruction as instructional strategies.
- Small group instruction was observed during classroom visits.
- Administration reported that three years ago they implemented the turnaround plan and replaced 50% of the staff. For each of the following years there has been about a 25% turnover rate that has complicated implementation of instructional strategies.
- All focus groups have reported that student academic performance has continually increased during the past few years.
- The teacher focus group explained that the most recent (winter) NWEA assessment results indicate that student growth from fall to winter increased at or above the expected growth rate for an entire year. Teachers shared the expectation that similar gains will continue throughout the remainder of the year.
- Observations revealed college and university logos throughout the building as well as college acceptance letters for the current senior class. Additional displays of where previous students are currently attending universities across the country.

### Turnaround Strategy Domain 1: Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration

The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration.

**Key Question:** How, and to what extent, do you (and your leadership team) cultivate shared ownership, responsibility, and professional collaboration in the school?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Teaming, Shared Leadership and Responsibility, and Collaboration</b></p> <p>Distributed leadership structures and practices are apparent throughout the school building in the form of an active and well-represented Leadership Team and grade-level and vertical teams.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school leadership team meets regularly and includes representation from all grades and student needs.</li> <li>• Grade-level and vertical teams meet regularly.</li> <li>• Teams exhibit a strong commitment to high expectations for all students and a willingness to work together to improve instruction.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Using Teams, Shared Leadership, and a Collaborative and Trusting Environment to Accelerate Improvement</b></p> <p>Administrators and teachers (through teacher teams or involvement in the leadership team) are monitoring and assessing the implementation and impact of key improvement strategies, use of resources, classroom instructional practices, and non-academic supports on student achievement.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adaptation:</b> Leadership has the demonstrated ability to adapt, innovate and do whatever it takes to improve student achievement.</li> <li>• <b>Instructional Observation:</b> Instruction is formally and informally observed and meaningful feedback is provided. Teachers, as well as students, are held to high expectations.</li> </ul>	

- Each of the adult focus groups indicated that attendance is a significant problem at Pontiac High School.
- Administration reported that 87 students have failed a class during the first semester and attribute this to their attendance. It was reported that they have missed 20% of the first semester.
- The community focus group characterized the attendance challenge as a home life restraint challenge.
- In response to the attendance/home life restraint challenge the following strategies have been reported:
  - Phoenix task force (Administration, Social Worker, behavior Interventionist)
    - This team weekly reviews attendance data and intervention outcomes.
    - It was also reported that the school works with the DHHS success coach to receive assistance in removing the barriers students are facing outside of the school by provided various resources.



- Administration reported that having the success coach has escalated the speed in which families receive assistance in order to reduce the barriers to attending school.
- A student's home is called for every absence. Example provided: If a student was present in the morning and was absent to an afternoon class, the parent would receive an automated call from the school.
  - Administration reported that parents call the building to inquire about the automated call that was from the school.
  - Classroom teachers and the advisory teacher call home after a pattern of absences are noticed.
  - 3 to 5 days absent trigger contact with the Phoenix Task Force.
  - 5 to 7 days absent trigger a letter home and a call home to schedule a parent conference
    - Student academic, social, and attendance profile is shared with the parent.
    - Parents sign an agreement
- Administration reported that the above strategies were revised this year based upon the identification of fractures within the system.
- Reports from the administration focus group and teacher focus group varied slightly in the number of absences that trigger a particular intervention.
- Teachers, administrators and students reported that teachers review grades and attendance with students during advisory class, and call home when there is a concern.
- Administration reported that students meet with their counselors to set academic goals for the year in the fall.
  - Example provided: An 11<sup>th</sup> grade student shares his/her interest. The student designs a plan to reach the goal, commits to a timeline, and discusses the plan with the counselor. Time is provided during advisory class to accomplish this task
  - Administration reported that students complete Educational Development Plans (EDP) beginning in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Each year they are refined as part of the process described above.
- Administration reported the following changes at the school during the past 3 years:
  - Students are able to identify their own course of study based upon personal interest and future goals.
    - The student group confirmed that they have opportunities to select courses based upon interest and request adjustments.
    - Students also reported that counselors encourage students to persevere in courses that are challenging as opposed to dropping the class.
    - Students reported that the counselors track their classes to ensure the student has the appropriate courses for graduation.
    - Students reported that teachers, counselors and administrators encourage students to continue to pursue larger goals upon accomplishing set goals.
      - Example: A student shared the completion of health services course work at "O – Tech" and was offered a student job at a local health facility where an internship was completed. The student explained that the staff encouraged going further to explore nursing as an additional option.
    - Students shared that the school expects students to reach higher every time they reach their goals long after they graduate from high school.
  - Development of new partnerships



- Examples:
  - General motors Student Corps (10 students from PHS)
    - 83% of those that participate attend college
  - Oakland School of Nursing for health care courses
    - 18 month program
    - Students spend ½ day at Pontiac High School and ½ day at Oakland University. (Oakland Univ. provides transportation)
    - Students earn technician certificates enabling them to be employable in the health care field (see example above).
  - Grade level leaders (Assistant Principals) review grades and attendance for all teachers under their supervision every two weeks and conference with teachers in a variety of ways in order to make adjustments when necessary.
  - Implementation of the communication protocols and shared leadership through the various teams that have been created.
  - Development of the dashboard data system (attendance, tardy, suspension)
  - Development and implementation of the Advisory class
  - Readjusting of the school and “O-Tech” schedule to ensure a smooth transition and elimination of lag time. Students no longer are stationed in a holding room because they return to the building in the middle of a class hour.
  - Administrative team meets every morning to prepare for the day, and every afternoon to debrief. The team includes the security lead and others supporting the functions of the building.
  - Administration and staff reported that the previous support provided for blended learning had concluded. Consequently, 2 staff members who had participated in the training and implemented blended learning during this time have become building coaches focusing on blended learning with the student engagement team (SET).

## Turnaround Strategy Domain 2: *Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction*

The school uses an aligned system of common core curricula, assessments, and common instructional practices across the school and content areas, and employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive instruction.

**Key Question:** What are the strategies and practices that you and your colleagues use to improve instruction? Specifically, how do you work to improve teachers' instruction?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Common core curriculum and aligned and rigorous instructional practices.</b>  Administrators and teachers develop and use vertically and horizontally aligned curricula and instructional strategies that includes common units, lessons, assessments, and instructional strategies and language within and across grades and content areas.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers' unit and lesson plans are similarly structured, incorporating best practices, directly linking lesson content with the grade-level standards and standards taught in prior and subsequent grades.</li> <li>A common set of instructional strategies, academic language, and other learning tools are evident in lessons and in practice, to enable students to access content.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Defined expectations for high quality instructional practices</b>  The school has a clear instructional focus and shared expectations for instructional best practices that address students' instructional needs.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders and teachers understand the instructional focus and how the instructional focus informs (or is evident in) classroom practice.</li> <li>Teachers have received training and professional development on the instruction focus and related instructional strategies.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Teacher support and feedback to improve instruction</b>  Teachers are actively supported to develop high quality lessons, deliver high quality lessons and instruction and to become experts in using and refining effective instructional strategies.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal (or administrators or coaches) spend significant time in classrooms, observing teachers' instruction and providing teachers with constructive and useful feedback on instructional practices.</li> <li>Teachers (and teacher team) use a variety of standards-based assessments to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies and modify instruction accordingly.</li> </ul>	

- Teachers and administrators reported the following Structures in place designed for teacher improvement

- PLC – all teachers participate; Departments meet weekly to review curriculum, teaching strategies, and/or instructional professional development needs. The information gathered is provided to the Instructional Leadership Team.
- Observation/ classroom walkthrough
  - Building administrators conduct classroom walkthroughs daily
  - Central office administration conducts walkthroughs weekly
  - Instructional coach –
    - Visits classrooms several times during the week to provide constructive feedback with the teachers. This person is welcome in the classroom and has solid information that the team knows will work and is research based.
  - Department chairs visit other classes to observe and discuss instruction and planning.
  - Teachers talk to each other to share ideas that are working with common students.
  - Administration conduct 2 formal observations annually for tenured teachers.
  - Administration conduct 3 formal observations annually for non-tenured teachers.
  - Recent walkthroughs and PLC discussions resulted in culturally responsive training.
- Instructional coaches provide training specifically related to their content area focus.
  - All teachers have individual opportunities to participate in professional development through Oakland Schools (ISD).



### Turnaround Strategy Domain 3: *Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students*

The school is able to provide student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs

**Key Question:** How, and to what extent, does your school provide student-specific supports and interventions to students?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Tiered and Targeted Interventions for Students and Monitoring for Effectiveness</b></p> <p>The school has a system (structures, practices, resources) for providing targeted instructional interventions and supports to all students which also includes close monitoring of the impact of tiered interventions on students' progress.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are provided with targeted, student-specific instruction and interventions in direct response to their academic areas of need, rather than placing entire groups of students in intervention groups.</li> <li>• The impact of classroom-based and tiered interventions is frequently monitored (e.g., regularly, in 2, 4, or 6 week intervals and often by grade-level teams or by school support teams) and then refined in direct response to students' needs.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Data Use and Data Informed Targeting of Interventions</b></p> <p>Administrators and teachers use a variety of ongoing assessments (formative, benchmark, and summative) to frequently and continually assess instructional effectiveness and to identify students' individual academic needs.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of valid and reliable assessments (standards-based and performance assessments) are used consistently, within and across grades and content area.</li> <li>• Administrators and teachers are using assessment to identify the specific students needing additional support and the targeted areas of need for each specific student.</li> </ul>	

- Tiered supports reported by administrators:
  - 2 double dose math and reading courses
  - PSAT data assists with identification for double dose
  - In October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students completed the PSAT
    - 9<sup>th</sup> grade was not part of the building until after the October testing window.
      - The 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers moved from the middle school into the high school after the first quarter was complete.
  - NWEA tests are given each fall, winter, and spring
    - Teachers use data to determine to tier interventions for students.
- The teachers reported tier I instruction as implementation of the focused instructional strategies for all students, tier II instruction includes small group assistance with an interventionist and extended time in advisory labs.
- Teacher explained that students are able to move fluidly from tier to tier, which encourages the students to improve.

- The teachers listed after school tutoring, Project Excel, and credit recovery as additional resources for student support.
- Teachers reported that 30% of the student body is identified for special education services. Students are served in pull-out resource classes and inclusion classes. Teachers provide the general education curriculum with designated supports for success.
- The teachers reported that there is a specific system utilized for special education identification and services for students.
- Teachers reported that often when students who are identified Learning Disabled at PHS and transfer out, they are identified as Cognitively Impaired at the receiving school although testing data does not support such a finding. Students then return to receive the services we provide.
- Teachers reported that 20% of the special education population participate in NWEA testing and have they have lower scores than other students, however they are showing significant progress that exceed national growth rates.
- Data analysis process as described by administration
  - PLC departments identify students as proficient, close to p proficient, or far from proficient based upon RIT score. Tiered intervention and flexible grouping is determined by this data.



#### Turnaround Strategy Domain 4: School Climate and Culture

The school has established a climate and culture that provides a safe, orderly and respectful environment for students and a collegial, collaborative, and professional culture among teachers that supports the school's focus on increasing student achievement.

**Key Question:** How does your school attend to students' social-emotional health and establish a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<b>Safety and secure learning environment.</b> The school has established and provides a safe and secure learning environment for students, staff and community members.  Key indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student to student interaction and teacher to student interactions are respectful and considerate, as observed during the visit.</li></ul>	
<b>Shared Behavioral Expectations that support student learning</b> Administrators and teachers have and use a clearly established set of behavioral expectations and practices that supports students' learning.  Key indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expectations of student behavior are written and clearly shared and understood throughout the school building.</li><li>• Behavioral expectations are reinforced through consistently applied rewards and consequences (consistent among and across teachers and grades).</li></ul>	
<b>Targeted and effective social-emotional supports</b> The school has identified, established, and proactively provides effective social-emotional resources and supports for students in need of such supports and assistance.  Key indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school has identified a wide array of effective social-emotional responses and supports for students in need of such assistance and support.</li><li>• Students that may need or benefit from social-emotional supports are identified and receive targeted social-emotional support.</li><li>• Data on the effectiveness of social-emotional supports is collected and monitored.</li></ul>	

- Students shared that the administrations has grade level assemblies at the beginning of the year to explain the rules and expectations of the building.
- Teachers remind the students of expectations in the classroom.
- During observations, the team noticed classroom rules posted, however expectations were not observed posted in the public locations such as the halls.
- Students shared the incidents of fights in the building was three to four a month about 3 years ago, currently fighting in school is rare, less than one a month.



- All focus groups indicated that the school has multiple resources to meet the social/emotional needs of the students. Furthermore, they reported that the needs expand to the student's home in order to support the family and reduce barriers to student success.
- Focus groups listed multiple partners and programs that exist include, but are not limited to, primary health services in the building, mentor programs, tutoring, transportation to Oakland University, and programs that provide food and other resources to struggling families.
- Although there are many resources and means for identifying needs, there was little indication the school and community partners are monitoring data around the effectiveness and academic impact of the services they are providing.
- Students with Individual Education plans being disciplined have alternative learning environments provided for them to ensure that they continue to receive the needed academic services

DRAFT

## Turnaround Strategy Domain 5: District System to Support Accelerated Improvement and Turnaround

The district has developed systems for identifying schools that are not performing well, and strategies for monitoring and supporting school leadership and teachers.

Examples of district systems:

- Strategic placement and assignment of principals and teachers in high need schools, including the use of incentives to get the right leaders and teachers in high need schools.
- Provision of additional staffing and resource autonomy to leaders in high need schools
- Provision of additional supports (e.g., coaching supports, instructional resources) to high need schools.

### Key Questions:

- How does the district monitor and/or support you in your efforts to improve instruction and raise student achievement?
- To what extent has the district provided you with additional autonomy to make changes to staff (e.g., to hire new teachers and/or quickly remove teachers not supportive of your work), to the school's schedule, and in your use of resources? How much autonomy do you have?

	Alignment with Best Practice
<b>District Capacity - Core Functions</b> The District has established and/or provides schools with base supports necessary for effective teaching and learning (Core curriculum and professional development, assessments, data systems, instructional materials, human capital).	
<b>District capacity - Monitor and support</b> The district has established and communicated a district-wide improvement strategy, including a vision and specific goals for improvement. The improvement strategy includes specific strategies for monitoring and supporting schools (leaders, teachers, and students).	
<b>District Capacity – Conditions and Autonomy</b> The district provides schools with sufficient autonomy and authority to implement turnaround actions, while holding schools accountable for results.	

- Administration reported the following:
  - Central office hiring practices have been revised to enable greater participation in the staff hiring process including the use of a consortium to seek out candidates.
  - The administration is offered flexibility to allocate funding that is provided to the building.
  - Building-wide autonomy for programming is provided so that administrators and staff can make decisions based upon identified needs.
  - Example provided: Administration advocated for a change to the master schedule to include four AP classes. Approval was provided and teachers were trained so that could be implemented this year.
  - There are limitations to the flexibility due to financial constraints and processes as a result of the consent agreement with the state
    - Example:
      - The school implemented a new English Language Learners program for new level 1 and level 2 learners in November. There is a need for additional support that the school is unable to provide due to a lack of staffing. Funding for this staffing needs to be approved by the Treasury Department.

- Teachers reported\District support has recently increased significantly.
  - Examples:
    - District administrators have entered the building to assist permanent guest teachers filling vacant positions.
    - Increased visibility in the building.
    - Providing assistance and training with the development of common assessments to ensure they are aligned to the state standards.
    - Resource teachers are involved with the development of common assessments in order to development alternative assessments that address the standards to accommodate students with disabilities.
    - Providing monthly professional development opportunities.



## **Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 2b: Operational On-Site Review (Facility Conditions Index)**

The SRO partnered with DTMB's Facilities & Business Services Administration Office (SFA) to determine a facility conditions index (FCI) for Pontiac High School. The FCI measures maintenance and repair costs against current replacement cost of the building. The lower the number, the less cost effective it is for the district to keep the building open.

All inspections were designed to be non-intrusive and the results were based on observations and assumptions given the factual knowledge provided.

**FCI SCORE: 46.7**

A copy of DTMB's FCI report is attached to this report as Appendix B.

DRAFT

### Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 3: Access and Availability

Whether statutorily required under MCL 380.391(3), MCL 380.507(6), MCL 380.528(6), or MCL 380.561(6), or optionally adopted under MCL 380.1280c, the SRO is committed to completing an analysis of whether the proposed closure will result in unreasonable hardship to pupils attending Pontiac High School. The SRO will consider other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by Pontiac High School to determine if the closure would result in an unreasonable hardship for the impacted students. The SRO is committed to ensuring that any closure does not necessitate the enrollment of a displaced student in another failing school. When evaluating the sufficiency of other public school options for affected pupils and unreasonable hardship, the SRO evaluates a variety of factors that can generally be organized into three different categories. These categories include, but are not limited to:

- **Geography:** Are there schools within a reasonable number of miles from the school identified that serve the same grade levels as the identified school?
- **Performance:** Are there schools that were identified during the geographic evaluation that also have an acceptable Top-to-Bottom ranking?
- **Access:** Do the students that would be displaced by the NLA Action have reasonable access to the schools identified during both the geographic and performance evaluations?

The results of the SRO's analysis are included in the below table. The number of schools that meet the parameters defined in the left most two columns is included in column #3 and the estimated capacity of the qualifying schools is included in column #4. The right-most two columns define the # of qualifying schools that would not require students to utilize the schools-of-choice legislation (MCL 388.1705/MCL 388.1705c) to gain access and the estimated capacity of those qualifying schools that would not require utilization of the schools-of-choice legislation.

Distance Parameter (Maximum in miles)	TTB Ranking Parameter (Minimum)	# of Qualifying School-of-Choice Schools	Estimated Capacity of Qualifying School-of-Choice Schools	# of Qualifying Local Access Schools	Estimated Capacity of Qualifying Local Access Schools	Total # of Qualifying Schools that Displaced Students Could Access	Total Estimated Capacity of Qualifying Schools that Displaced Students Could Access
5	25	2	21	0	0	2	21
10	25	8	177	0	0	8	177
15	25	30	468	1	1	31	469
20	25	43	927	1	1	44	928
25	25	53	1028	5	109	58	1137
30	25	66	1114	7	110	73	1224

#### Unreasonable Hardship Data Key Takeaways

- In 5 mile range there are 2 schools of choice earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 21.
- In a 5 mile range there are 0 local access schools earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 0.
- There is a total of 2 schools within a 5 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 21.
- 100% of the qualifying enrollment capacity within 5 miles are located at a school of choice.
- In a 10 mile range there are 8 schools of choice earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 177.
- In a 10 mile range there are 0 local access schools earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 0.
- There is a total of 8 schools within a 10 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 177.
- 100% of the qualifying enrollment capacity within 10 miles are located at a school of choice.
- In a 15 mile range there are 30 schools of choice earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 468.
- In a 15 mile range there are 1 local access schools earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 1.



- There is a total of 31 schools within a 15 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 469.
- 100% of the qualifying enrollment capacity within 15 miles are located at a school of choice.
- In a 20 mile range there are 43 schools of choice earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 927.
- In a 20 mile range there are 1 local access schools earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 1.
- There is a total of 44 schools within a 20 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 928.
- 100% of the qualifying enrollment capacity within 20 miles are located at a school of choice.
- In a 25 mile range there are 53 schools of choice earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 1,028.
- In a 25 mile range there are 5 local access schools earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 109.
- There is a total of 58 schools within a 25 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 1,137.
- 90% of the qualifying enrollment capacity within 25 miles are located at a school of choice.
- In a 30 mile range there are 66 schools of choice earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 1,114.
- In a 30 mile range there are 7 local access schools earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with a combined estimated enrollment capacity of 110.
- There is a total of 73 schools within a 30 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 1,224.
- 91% of the qualifying enrollment capacity within 30 miles are located at a school of choice.
- Based on current enrollment data, the 844 students have 44 schools within a 20 mile range earning a Top-To-Bottom ranking of 25 or greater with an estimated capacity of 928 to select as alternative educational option; 100% of these options are schools of choice.

#### Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 4: Final Determination

The SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination is based on a comprehensive review of all available data, the results from both operational and academic on-site review visits and an examination the other public school options that are available to the students that would be impacted by the closure of Pontiac High School. All of the information produced and insights gained from the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process that have been detailed in this report, were considered when answering the three key questions that comprise the SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination.

**Question 1:** Are the academic and operational and academic realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround?

The academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround.
The academic but not the operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround
The operational but not the academic realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround
Neither the academic nor the operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround

**Question 2:** Are there are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?

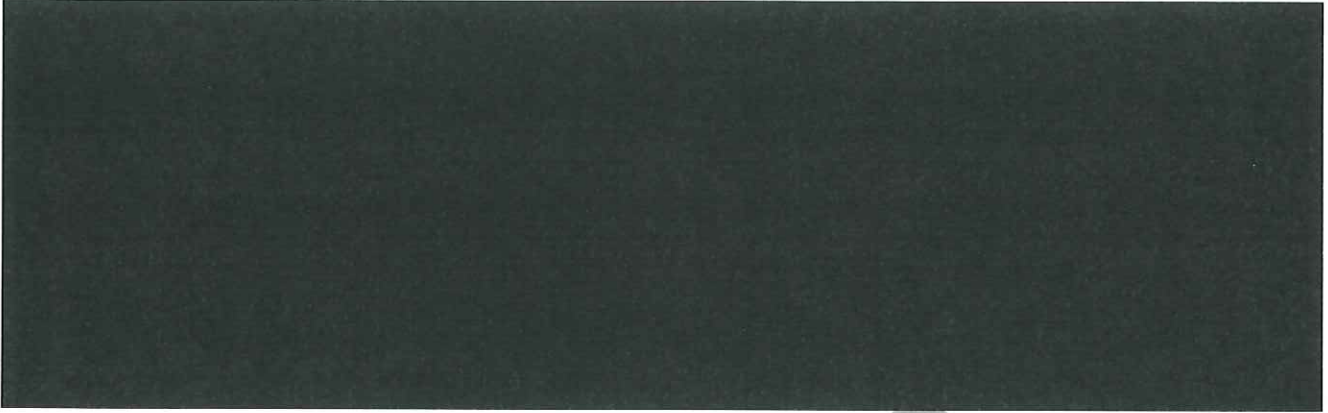
There are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?
There are insufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?

**Question 3:** Would the proposed NLA action result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils?

The proposed NLA action would not result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils
The proposed NLA action would result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils

**Determination:**

**Next Steps:**



DRAFT



## **APPENDIX A: SRO Unreasonable Hardship Data Request Packet**

The SRO is committed to ensuring that the Unreasonable Hardship Determination required under MCL 380.391(3), MCL 380.507(6), MCL 380.528(6), MCL 380.561(6), or optionally adopted under MCL 380.1280c is as informed as possible. Therefore, the SRO is requested that the following information be provided in an editable format (e.g., .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, etc.) by Tuesday, February 1, 2017. Where possible, the information provided will be verified against previously reported and publically available data.

### **Data review components:**

- Academic
- Climate and Culture
- Professional
- Operational

DRAFT

## Academic Data

---

### Top-to-Bottom Rankings by Year

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0	0	0	2	3

### Student Proficiency – Mathematics

Student Group	% Proficient or Above 2013-2014	% Proficient or Above 2014-2015	% Proficient or Above 2015-2016
All Students			
Native American			
Asian		15.38	20
African-American			
Hispanic			
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White		7.69	
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged			
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)		5.88	
English Language Learners			

**Student Proficiency – Reading/ELA**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2013-2014</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2014-2015</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2015-2016</b>
All Students	18.32	12.11	21.28
Native American			
Asian		38.46	30
African-American	15.26	6.85	18.94
Hispanic	26	16	23.17
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White	21.43	33.33	
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged	16.75	10.12	21.08
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)	7.02	7.41	
English Language Learners	19.15	14.55	

**Student Proficiency – Science**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2013-2014</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2014-2015</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2015-2016</b>
All Students			6.36
Native American			
Asian		7.69	20
African-American			
Hispanic	5.88		12.66
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White	7.14	15.38	
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged			6.59
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)		5.88	
English Language Learners			



### Student Proficiency – Social Studies

Student Group	% Proficient or Above 2013-2014	% Proficient or Above 2014-2015	% Proficient or Above 2015-2016
All Students	9.3	8.81	9.83
Native American			
Asian		25	30
African-American	5.95	8.67	5.19
Hispanic	16	5.88	13.92
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White	20	8.33	
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged	5.91	7.02	9.09
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)		6.45	
English Language Learners	8.51	7.27	

### 4-Year Graduation Rates (if Applicable)

Student Group	# In Cohort 2013-2014	% Graduated 2013-2014	# In Cohort 2014-2015	% Graduated 2014-2015
All Students	362	59.1%	325	71.7%
Male	188	50.0%	183	65.6%
Female	174	69.0%	142	79.6%
Native American				
Asian	16	81.3%		
African-American	258	58.1%	234	71.8%
Hispanic	63	60.3%	60	75.0%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander				
White	23	47.8%	20	60.0%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic				
Economically Disadvantaged	254	55.9%	250	68.8%
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)	71	42.3%	64	53.1%
English Language Learners	48	70.8%	54	81.5%

## Climate and Culture Data

### Enrollment by Subgroup<sup>2</sup>

Race	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
All Students	975	924	844
Male	527	488	423
Female	448	436	421
Native American			
Asian	38	34	39
African-American	693	619	525
Hispanic	177	208	225
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White	62	55	45
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged	667	674	617
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)	184	131	110
English Language Learners	83	194	142

### Enrollment by Grade

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2013-2014	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	313	343	313	969
2014-2015	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	286	285	353	924
2015-2016	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	294	270	280	844

### Special Population Percentages

	2013-2014 (%)	2014-2015 (%)	2015-2016 (%)
English Language Learner	8.5%	21.0%	16.8%
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)	18.9%	14.2%	13.0%
Economically Disadvantaged	68.4%	72.9%	73.1%

### Attendance

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Attendance Rate (%)	86.3%	86.7%	88.0%
Percent Chronically Absent	52.0%	44.6%	47.2%
Chronically Absent Student Count	494	410	404

<sup>2</sup> Enrollment by student(s) does not necessarily indicate that the student(s) will take state assessments.

## Professional Data

---

### Teacher Evaluations

	# of Teachers 2013-2014	% of Teachers 2013-2014	# of Teachers 2014-2015	% of Teachers 2014-2015	# of Teachers 2015-2016	% of Teachers 2015-2016
Highly Effective	18	33.3%	17	31.5%	19	30.7%
Effective	34	63.0%	37	68.5%	40	64.5%
Marginally Effective	2	3.7%	0	0.0%	2	3.2%
Ineffective	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.6%

Total Teachers	54
----------------	----

54
----

62
----